



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

Committee Bill No. 955

LCO No. 6254



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAE)

***AN ACT REQUIRING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE
CONTRACTORS TO ENSURE INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH
PROFICIENCY ARE ABLE TO ACCESS PUBLIC SERVICES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section
2 and sections 2 to 5, inclusive, of this act:

3 (1) "Limited English proficiency individuals" means individuals
4 whose primary and preferred language is not English and who have a
5 limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

6 (2) "Language access" means the provision of services, information
7 and resources in languages other than English to ensure equitable
8 access.

9 (3) "Interpretation services" means the provision of spoken language
10 and sign language assistance, including in-person interpreters,
11 telephonic interpretation services and video remote interpretation
12 services by a qualified interpreter.

13 (4) "Translation services" means the provision of written materials,
14 including forms, brochures, web sites and other informational materials,
15 in languages other than English.

16 (5) "Qualified interpreter" means an individual who is fluent in both
17 English and a target language and has received formal training.

18 (6) "Covered entity" means any agency, department or organization
19 within the state that receives state or federal funding or otherwise
20 provides public services.

21 (7) "State contractor" means an entity that has entered into a state
22 contract with a state or quasi-public agency.

23 (8) "State contract" means a contract (A) between an entity and a state
24 or quasi-public agency, or (B) for the receipt of financial assistance by
25 an entity from the state, including federal funding.

26 (9) "Subcontractor" means a person who performs work for a state
27 contractor pursuant to a contract for work for the state or a municipality.

28 (b) Each covered entity as well as each state contractor and
29 subcontractor receiving state or federal funds shall:

30 (1) Implement policies that ensure meaningful access to their
31 programs and services for limited English proficiency individuals;

32 (2) Conduct an assessment of the language needs of the communities
33 they serve, including the collection and analysis of demographic data
34 such as the 2020 Census and the American Community Survey
35 estimates, or successive survey, to identify languages spoken by limited
36 English proficiency individuals;

37 (3) Ensure the availability of translation and interpretation services in
38 languages that reflect the limited English proficiency individuals in the
39 state, including, but not limited to, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese,
40 Arabic, Italian, Haitian, Hindi, French, Russian and others, based on the

41 dialects and needs identified based upon the assessment conducted
42 under subdivision (2) of this subsection;

43 (4) Provide sign language interpretation and other accommodations
44 for individuals with hearing impairments in all public services and
45 programs in their preferred language; and

46 (5) Ensure that all public-facing materials and communications are
47 written in plain language, making them understandable to a broad
48 audience, including individuals with limited literacy or limited English
49 proficiency individuals.

50 (c) Each state agency shall develop and implement a language access
51 plan that includes policies for providing meaningful access to limited
52 English proficiency individuals in accordance with the provisions of
53 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Any such plan shall (1) provide
54 for staff training to ensure staff members can effectively work with
55 limited English proficiency individuals, including understanding when
56 to use professional interpreters or translation services, (2) establish
57 procedures for identifying limited English proficiency individuals who
58 require language assistance and ensure that all service delivery points
59 are equipped to assist such individuals, including telephone and web-
60 based services, and (3) ensure that limited English proficiency
61 individuals with disabilities have equal access to language and
62 disability-related services, including assistance with interpretation and
63 translation of materials in accessible formats such as braille, audio and
64 assistive technology.

65 (d) Each state agency shall designate an existing employee as a
66 language access coordinator who will be responsible for implementing
67 language access policies and coordinating services in accordance with
68 the adopted plan of such agency. Such coordinator shall collect and
69 report data on the language needs of the populations they serve, using
70 data from the 2020 Census and American Community Survey estimates,
71 or successive survey, and report such data to the Office of Language
72 Access not later than May first of each year.

73 (e) Each state agency shall provide publicly available language access
74 plans on the Internet web site of such agency, detailing available
75 language assistance services and the process for requesting such
76 services.

77 (f) Each state agency shall evaluate and periodically revise written
78 materials and web sites to ensure that they are accessible to people of
79 varying literacy levels, including those with limited English proficiency.

80 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section:

81 (1) "Health care provider" means any person employed by or acting
82 on behalf of a health care facility or institution; and

83 (2) "Health care facility or institution" means a hospital, nursing
84 home, rest home, home health care agency, home health aide agency,
85 emergency medical services organization, assisted living services
86 agency, outpatient surgical facility and an infirmary operated by an
87 educational institution for the care of students enrolled in, and faculty
88 and employees of, such institution.

89 (b) Each health care facility or institution that receives state or federal
90 funding shall ensure that limited English proficiency individuals
91 seeking health care services from a health care provider in the state
92 receive language assistance to ensure equal access to programs, services
93 and activities, including, but not limited to, providing timely, competent
94 and culturally appropriate language assistance services, including
95 translation of health-related materials and interpretation services prior
96 to, during and after medical appointments.

97 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) Each local and regional board
98 of education shall ensure that limited English proficiency individuals
99 who are students in the district of such board and the families of such
100 students receive information and services in their preferred language at
101 all levels of education, from preschool through high school, including,
102 but not limited to, providing interpretation services for limited English

103 proficiency students and parents during parent-teacher conferences,
104 disciplinary proceedings and other educational activities.

105 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) Each constituent unit, as
106 defined in section 10a-1 of the general statutes, shall ensure that limited
107 English proficiency individuals who are students in the institutions of
108 higher education of such constituent unit and the families of such
109 students receive information and services in their preferred language.

110 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) (a) There is established an
111 Office of Language Access within the Department of Consumer
112 Protection. The Commissioner of Consumer Protection shall designate
113 an existing employee to serve as the executive director of the Office of
114 Language Access.

115 (b) The office shall:

116 (1) Oversee the enforcement of language access policies within state
117 agencies;

118 (2) Investigate complaints of noncompliance with the provisions of
119 sections 1 to 4, inclusive, of this act, including failure to provide
120 appropriate interpretation or translation services;

121 (3) Establish a formal process for individuals to request language
122 assistance services; and

123 (4) Analyze the data collected and submitted by language access
124 coordinators under section 1 of this act to evaluate the need for
125 expanded language assistance services in different regions of the state
126 and adjust language access plans to meet the evolving needs of limited
127 English proficiency communities.

128 (c) Not later than February 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the
129 executive director shall submit a report, in accordance with the
130 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing
131 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters

132 relating to government administration, human services, public health,
133 higher education and education. Such report shall include a summary
134 of the analysis conducted under subdivision (4) of subsection (b) of this
135 section, the services provided by the office during the preceding year,
136 the results of any investigations conducted under this section during the
137 preceding year and any recommendations for necessary legislation.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section

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Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To require the adoption of various policies concerning the offering of translation and interpretation services to ensure that individuals with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to programs and services offered by state and local government agencies, contractors and other entities that receive state funding.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]

Co-Sponsors: SEN. RAHMAN, 4th Dist.; REP. REYES, 75th Dist.
REP. TURCO, 27th Dist.

S.B. 955